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## HIV/AIDS and Men Who Have Sex with Men (MSM)

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The term *men who have sex with men (MSM)* refers to all men who have sex with other men, regardless of how they identify themselves (gay, bisexual, or heterosexual). In the United States, HIV and AIDS have had a tremendous impact on MSM. Consider these facts:

- AIDS has been diagnosed for more than half a million MSM. Over 300,000 MSM with AIDS have died since the beginning of the epidemic.
- MSM made up more than two thirds (68%) of all men living with HIV in 2005, even though only about 5% to 7% of men in the United States reported having sex with other men.
- In a 2005 study of 5 large US cities, 46% of African American MSM were HIV-positive.

Since HIV/AIDS in MSM was first diagnosed 1981, gay and bisexual men have been leaders in dealing with the challenges of the epidemic. Gay organizations and activists, through their work, have contributed greatly to many of the guidelines for prevention, treatment, and the care of people living with HIV/AIDS.

For complex reasons, HIV/AIDS continues to take a high toll on the MSM population. For example, the number of new HIV/AIDS cases among MSM in 2005 was 11% more than the number of cases in 2001. It is unclear whether this increase is due to more testing, which results in more diagnoses, or to an increase in the number of HIV infections. Whatever the reasons, in 2005, MSM still accounted for about 53% of all new HIV/AIDS cases and 71% of cases in male adults and adolescents.

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